

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Jail ministry allows no judgement, only compassion

By Elizabeth Watson

ARLINGTON, Texas — Harold Elliott had just delivered a death notice to a widow who thought she was still a wife.

It was the 54th suicide response to Elliott's 13-year police chaplain career. But the job still wasn't easy.

Elliott works full time with the Arlington, Texas, Police Department. He is a graduate of Southwestern Seminary and had been a Southern Baptist pastor and volunteer chaplain for 22 years. His responsibility now is to minister to citizens and officers in crises — suicide, homicide, accidental death, divorce, stress and burnout.

Since 1984 Elliott has specialized in teen-age suicide prevention.

After responding to three teen suicides within a two-month period, Elliott decided to do something to stop the senseless deaths. He formed "Suicide Is Not Painless, Inc.," to inform teens and parents about the realities of suicide.

In 1985, Elliott produced the 22-minute film "Suicide Is Not Painless," a docudrama aimed at youth considering suicide. The educational film is designed to be shown in schools and churches.

Nearly half of the suicides in Arlington during Elliott's chaplaincy have involved teen-agers. He attributes this to a "total misconception about tragedy and death" among teen-agers.

"This is a generation that has never been tested," Elliott said. "To most teen-agers, trauma is having to watch a black and white television. They just don't know how to cope with real tragedy when it comes along.

"Many teen-agers think tragedy is forever and see death as an escape," Elliott said. He quoted a 17-year-old boy's suicide note: "... We've gone to this other life not knowing what to expect, but whatever happens, it has to be better than this."

"This teen-ager, like many others, probably picked up a

distorted 'eternalutopia' view of death in church and at funerals," Elliott said.

He believes the solution to teen suicide is teaching youth that life and its problems are temporary. "Commitments to spiritual truths can give them hope," he said.

Elliott's pastoral experience equipped him to share spiritual truths with teens and families of suicide victims.

"As I was driving to the scene of this last suicide I was thinking about how many times I've had to do this," Elliott said. "That part has become somewhat ordinary. But having to tell the family about what has just happened is never ordinary at all.

"When I had to deliver the death message today I was so glad I was the one doing it because I know God called me to this. He gives me grace for the job," he said.

"But that still doesn't take away the lump in my throat as I stand on the doorstep about to knock on the door," he said.



Harold Elliott, Arlington Police Department police chaplain, counsels with an officer. Elliott is an alumnus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.



The word of God in times of turmoil

The Baptist Book Store in San Salvador, El Salvador, provides access to the Bible and Christian literature for people in a land torn by political turmoil. Here, Libby Stennett, Southern Baptist missionary, talks with fellow bookstore

workers. Southern Baptist missionaries in El Salvador have asked for \$10,800 from the 1986 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to help continue operation of the bookstore. (FMB) PHOTO By Joanna Pinneo

Church-planting Kenyan lives out his priorities

By Art Toalston

MWIMUTO, Kenya (BP) — "Just one minute was like an hour" to Samueli Kihuga when he first read aloud from a Swahili Bible during a worship service.

"In about three months, I could preach 10 minutes."

Today, 16 years after becoming a Christian, Kihuga is a Baptist pastor with solid experience in church planting, door-to-door visitation, and theological education for lay people.

In unpretentious fashion, the 44-year-old pastor lives in the village of Mwimuto, just north of Nairobi. The two-room apartment he shares with his wife, Joyce, and their two sons and two daughters, ages 7 to 13, is in a neighborhood of several rows of wood-frame structures.

Mwimuto Baptist Church, the Swahili-language congregation he has

led the past four years, must help others "as we have been helped," Kihuga insists.

Thus the church has started a mission in the village of Kangemi, just northwest of Nairobi.

Kihuga has worked with Southern Baptist missionaries to start eight congregations, the first just four months after his conversion. All but two remain active.

He isn't the founding pastor of the congregation at Mwimuto. But he came to the mission when only seven members gathered in one room. Now the church has 100 members and meets in a nursery school.

Door-to-door visitation, two or three days a week, is a cornerstone of Kihuga's efforts to build churches.

Art Toalston writes for the FMB.

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

Legislature should act

The events at Bethesda girls' home over the past few weeks, at Redemption Ranch and at Redemption Baptist Church are affecting all Mississippi Baptists, though none of the entities mentioned are Southern Baptist in their affiliation.

Except for one event, we could just say that the whole thing is none of our business and be done with it. That event, however, was the reported closing of the church on a Sunday morning and preventing the regular Sunday morning worship service.

Whether we agree with what was going on at Bethesda girls' home or not, and regardless of the fact that the same people were involved in both the girls' home and the church, if indeed the state closed the doors of a church, it had no business doing so. It is very likely that if it happened it was an inadvertent error; but, nevertheless, it is enough to send chills up and down the spine. To say the least, it would have been unconstitutional.

If it did happen once, regardless of the reason, what's to keep it from happening again?

On the other hand, what about the treatment of the girls. All we know is what we read in the papers. Surely that is factual material, but how much

has not been told simply because it has not been revealed?

So let's give thought to the situation just on the face of it. The strongest message that comes through is that there needs to be some sort of licensing procedure for any agency that is charged with taking care of minors. It is understood that the people who operated the girls' home would have claimed that licensing would have violated their freedom of action under the doctrine of separation of church and state. But when an agency is dealing with minor children whose parents do not exercise control over them, the situation transcends the church-state separation concept. They are not dealing with doctrines and concepts but human relations and human lives. The state should see that the interests of the children are dealt with fairly.

If the girls' home were providing care only for daughters of church members, there might be a reasonable claim to a violation of the church-state concept in a licensing requirement. When they go afield, however, to take girls who are referred to them regardless of who they are, where they are from, and what their religious condition is, then they

have left behind any church-state considerations and are dealing strictly on a person-to-person basis.

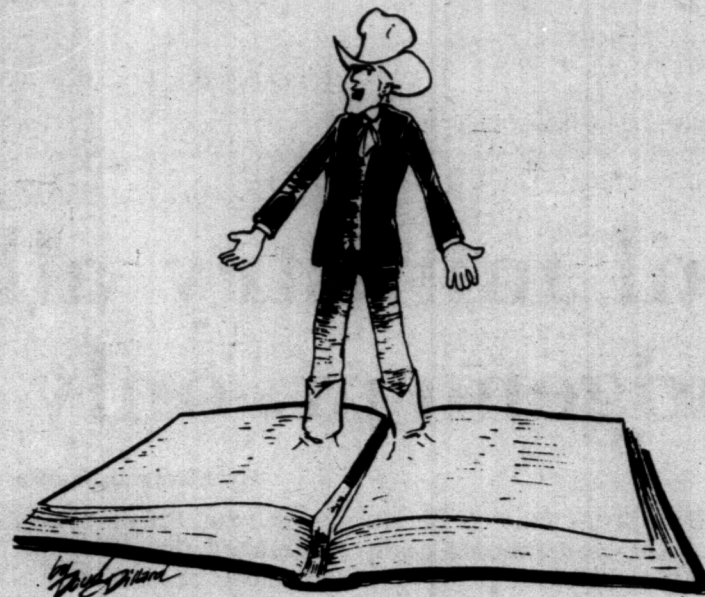
That calls for licensing. Mississippi, however, has no laws requiring licensing. The events of recent days at Bethesda girls' home calls for such laws to be established.

For those who are interested, our Mississippi Baptist Children's Home is voluntarily licensed by the state. It doesn't have to be licensed. It is licensed because it feels that any agency dealing with minor children should be subject to licensing.

The Mississippi Baptist Children's Home also is a member of the National Association of Homes for Children, which, according to Village officials, has much more stringent rules for membership than state licensing requires. And it bears repeating that the state licensing procedures are strictly voluntary.

The Mississippi Legislature has faced this issue before, and bills that would require licensing have always died in committee. The events of the past few weeks, however, point out the necessity of having licensing laws; and it would seem incumbent upon the Legislature to provide such laws in the coming session.

HERE I STAND



Reprinted from Baptist Standard

Our help is needed

There are three basic offerings during the year for which the Baptist Children's Village writes for help from its supporters. These are at Easter, the back to school offering in August, and at Christmas.

For a fourth offering the Village goes directly to the churches. That is the Mother's Day Offering in May.

Needless to say, this is the time for the Christmas Offering. The offering goal for this year is \$255,000.

It needs to be noted that the Village literally lives from offering to offering.

During any year there will be from 500 to 600 children who pass through the doors of the Children's Village as they are dependent on the Village for their sustenance. Village officials know that it takes \$5,410.95 a day, every day, to keep those doors open so that those children can be ministered to. The annual budget is \$1,975,000.

The Cooperative Program provides \$341,000. Memorial gifts account for about \$100,000 each year. Churches

Southern Baptists has a corner on believing the Bible is without error.

For most Southern Baptists it is just everyday Baptist business to believe all the Bible — Genesis through Revelation, including the historicity of Genesis 1-11, Jonah and the great fish, the miracles of the Old and New Testaments, the Ten Commandments, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, the sermon on the mount, the cross of Jesus Christ, the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, salvation only in Jesus Christ, baptism by immersion, love one another, the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, heaven, hell, tithing, the second coming of Jesus Christ and so

(Continued on page 9)

that have the Village in the budget contribute about \$240,000 a year. The total of these is \$681,000. That is a great deal of money and is sorely needed. It is greatly appreciated by the Village. But it is not enough.

The four offerings are necessary. And one can readily see that it is a correct statement to say that the Village lives from offering to offering. The Christmas offering is being counted on to carry the Village over until the Easter offering.

There are two points to be made by this piece. The first is to plead for the Children's Village to be remembered during the time of the Christmas offering. It is needed. In fact, it is a necessity for the continued ministry of the Village.

The second is to call attention to the efforts of the Mississippi Mission, the endeavor that is under way to provide a \$40 million endowment figure for the three colleges and the Children's Village. With its portion of that endowment figure in place, the Village will be able to breathe easier from offering to offering. The offerings still will be necessary. Even the income from the Village portion of the endowment will not be enough to tide the Village over through the year. The endowment, of course, will be greatly helpful and will assure the Village administration that the ministry will be able to continue without crisis times.

The endowment is not in place as yet. So the offerings are needed now as has been the case through the years past.

We must realize that these are our children. We are the ones who have declared that we will take care of them.

Our help is needed right now.

Guest opinion . . .

The Bible is benchmark

By Presnall Wood

Baptists and the Bible — they go together. Out of the deep conviction that the Bible is the word of God and authority for belief and practice, Baptists have rightly earned the reputation of being "People of the Book."

The Baptist concept concerning the Bible is seen in the joint worship services of Vacation Bible School when children and workers pledge allegiance not only to the United States and Christian flags but also the Bible. "I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word, and will make it a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path, and will hide its words in my heart that I may not sin against God." A good pledge. A pledge worthy of children and adults.

Believing the Bible is the Word of God, Baptists have made the Bible central in Baptist teaching and preaching. The Bible is the textbook of Baptist Sunday Schools. Most Southern Baptists have located the pulpits in their churches in the center of the platform, giving priority to the preaching of the Bible. The Bible is central in the curriculum of Southern Baptist seminaries.

The Baptist Faith and Message says, "... the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scrip-

tures of the Old and New Testaments. . . Underlining this truth, the 1963 statement says: "Baptists are a people who profess a living faith. This faith is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ who is 'the same yesterday and today, and forever.' Therefore, the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is Jesus Christ whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures."

There you have it. Clearly and concisely the consensus statement of the Baptist Faith and Message speaks of Baptists and the Bible. Surely Baptists can pledge to the Bible and sing sincerely, "Holy Bible, Book Divine, precious treasure, thou art mine."

This all seems so simple for most Southern Baptists. II Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," is what Baptists believe concerning the Bible.

Out of this conviction, Southern Baptists repeatedly have had no problem in a convention setting, the last being the 1986 Atlanta SBC, of reaffirming faith in the Bible as the Word of God as expressed in the scriptures portion

of the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963.

That statement says: "The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author; salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ."

In the 1981 SBC a motion was adopted to reaffirm belief in the 1963 statement "including all 17 articles plus the preamble which protects the conscience of the individual and guards us from a creedal faith." The convention also reaffirmed unanimously "our historic position that the Holy Bible, which has truth without any mixture of error for its matter, is our adequate rule of faith and practice."

Amen. Most Southern Baptists would say the Bible is "truth without any mixture of error." No one group of

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Send news and communications to
The Editor, Baptist Record
P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

Mother, daughter killed

Liberia missionary murderer confesses

By Marty Croll

YEKEPA, Liberia (BP) — A 32-year-old Liberian man admitted the murder of Southern Baptist missionary Libby Tarlton Senter and her daughter after missionary George Senter told the man he forgave him and asked him to confess.

The Liberian, Benjamin M. Morris, was arrested Nov. 27, the day after he allegedly stabbed Mrs. Senter, 47, and her daughter, Rachel, 10. Police and soldiers apprehended Morris at a checkpoint in Karnplay, Liberia, about 30 miles from Yekepa and 20 miles from the border of Ivory Coast, a nation to the northeast.

A formal charge by Liberian authorities was expected soon afterward, but police first were seeking a written confession. A trial was expected to be scheduled after that.

Morris confessed verbally to



Libby and Rachel Senter

Liberian officials the day after he was arrested that he committed the murders after Mrs. Senter intervened to prevent him from molesting her daughter.

His confession came after George Senter asked to speak with Morris privately. He told Morris he forgave him for what he had done to his wife and daughter.

"Looking face to face in Ben Morris' eyes, George expressed his forgiveness and asked Ben to make a confession," said Bradley Brown, administrator for the 67 Southern Baptist mission personnel assigned to Liberia. The conversation between Morris and Senter took several minutes and was punctuated by intermittent periods of emotional breakdown, Brown said.

"It was amazing," Brown said. "When George began to talk to him and tell him what he wanted him to do, very soon he began to cooperate and give the facts."

The murder represents only an isolated incident of a man who "gave himself over to wickedness," said Brown. "Liberians in this area feel terrible about it. There is an overwhelming expression of sympathy here."

One Liberian man, who didn't know the family, broke down and cried while talking to Senter when he discovered that it was Senter's wife and daughter who had been killed.

Missionaries and Liberians gathered at Mount Nimba Baptist Church in Yekepa for funeral services Nov. 30. Family and friends held a memorial service the day before in Mrs. Senter's hometown, Shelby, N.C., at Zion Baptist Church.

Mrs. Senter and her daughter had been dead for several hours when a missionary who lives nearby entered their home and found them Wednesday morning, Nov. 26.

Senter had driven to the capital city, Monrovia, Tuesday morning, Nov. 25, to pick up his 15-year-old son, Philip, so the family could celebrate an American-style Thanksgiving holiday together in Yekepa. Philip and a handful of other missionary children attend American Cooperative School in Monrovia, about four hours away.

Missionary Earl Williams went in to the Senter's home when Rachel did

not appear to leave for the school she attends with his own child. Williams, pastor of Mount Nimba Baptist Church, and his family live across from the Senter's.

Senter of Gibson, Tenn., is assigned as a field evangelist and has been working to start and strengthen churches in about 20 villages around the town. Mrs. Senter, assigned as a church and home worker, was involved heavily in her husband's work. The Senter's had lived in Yekepa since their foreign missionary career began in 1980.

Morris, a Baptist seminary graduate, had been doing odd jobs for Senter and Williams, and both men had worked with him to help involve him in Baptist work around Yekepa. But apparently he had been unable to work himself into a meaningful personal ministry in any of the churches, Brown said. "We've found out now there obviously was some resentment that he wasn't able to come in and probably be assistant pastor or

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The Second Front Page

The Baptist Record

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Youths to gather in Clinton, Dec. 29

The annual Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference will take place Dec. 29-30 at Mississippi College in Clinton and featuring Christian music, gospel messages, and the testimony of a Mississippi prison inmate.

The program, which is sponsored by the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will feature the testimony and singing

Gooch's tract explains that he is "a black belt in karate, a thief, a burglar, a heroin user, a talented singer, and now, a singer, serving life plus sixty years." Gooch became a Christian in 1982 and witnesses and sings whenever possible.

Featured speakers for the program include Dean Register, pastor of First Church, Gulfport; Jerry Pipes, a Jackson-based evangelist; George Fields, a Louisville, Ky.-based speaker and singer; and John Bramlett, a lay speaker and former professional football player with Denver and New England. Scott Ables, director of student activities at French Camp Academy, will give his testimony. Guy Henderson, director of evangelism for Mississippi Baptists, will be host.

The musical portions of the program will include Stacy Andrews and Eddie Thompson of New Albany. Andrews is a ninth grader at Daniel High School and Thompson is minister of music at Hillcrest Church, New Albany.

Glenn Garrett is a musician whose latest album is "Back Where Love Begins."

Other music will be presented by youth groups from Parkway Church, Jackson, and First Church, Biloxi.

Program committee chairman is Bruce Fields, minister of youth at First Church, Biloxi. Counseling director is Rich Malone, minister of youth at Parkway Church, Jackson.

The program begins with registration at 1 p.m. and special music at 2,



Register



Pipes



Gooch



Garrett



Henderson



Fields

Dec. 29. It concludes at 3:30 the next afternoon.

It is possible to avoid the long lines at registration. However, one must pre-register by Dec. 15. To pre-register, write the Evangelism Department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205. Include \$3 per person, which pays for syllabus and name tags.

By Dan Martin

WASHINGTON (BP) — A meeting between a nine-member Southern Baptist Convention fact-finding group and the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs was a "healthy confrontation," the study committee chairman said.

"We had our confrontation," said Gary F. Young, chairman of the special committee appointed by the SBC Executive Committee in September to study the relationship between the convention and the BJCPA, an organization of nine Baptist bodies in the United States and Canada.

The committee was appointed in response to a motion introduced in the 1986 annual meeting of the SBC which called for the SBC to withdraw from the BJCPA and to establish "an exclusive Southern Baptist presence" in the nation's capitol.

The two-day meeting Nov. 20-21 featured an unscheduled appearance by a U.S. senator, six religious groups who maintain Washington offices, as well as sharp questioning of the BJCPA staff on positions, leadership style, affiliations, and published writings.

It also included a briefing on the work of the BJCPA — which ranges from lobbying, to education, publication, research, working with governmental officials, and involvement in lawsuits, primarily at the Supreme Court level, which relate to First Amendment, religious liberty and separation of church and state. Briefing the committee were James M. Dunn, executive director, and Oliver S. (Buzz) Thomas, general counsel and director of research services.

Young said the "confrontation was painful, but all confrontations are painful for me." He added he con-

siders the confrontation on issues "healthy" because "it was the first time that participants in the issues were able to sit and talk about the matters that divide us."

He said the two-day meeting was "not intended to evaluate personnel. I felt it was a time to bring people who had various opinions together with the personnel (of the BJCPA) to see if we

Yates: probe "needed"

James Yates, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City, and vice chairman of the fact-finding committee dealing with the Baptist Joint Committee, told the Baptist Record that the meeting "was something that was very much needed."

He said the meeting was wholesome and that he believed the entire committee felt good about it. "We don't pretend to have any answers yet," he said, adding, "I don't think anybody wants to rush into any conclusions."

could answer some questions and clear up some of the difficulties. It was obvious after our first meeting (in October) that we were never going to be able to deal with the program of the Baptist Joint Committee until we had talked with them to try to clarify matters."

Young said that while "forgiveness and healing are now in the process," it "does not mean the matter is already solved. But it does mean that I think solutions are possible."

Previously, Young said he believes "adjustments" may be necessary if

(Continued on page 4)

Help wanted

A volunteer is urgently needed to work with younger missionary children, ages 5-8, during the mission meeting scheduled for Dec. 27, 1986 — Jan. 4, 1987, in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Lodging and meals will be provided, but the volunteer would be responsible for round-trip air fare and insurance. Air fare from Miami, Fla., to Montevideo, would be approximately \$1,100.

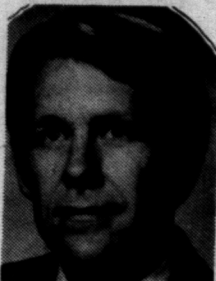
If interested, please contact Monica Keathley in the WMU Department at the Baptist Building as soon as possible. The phone number in Jackson is 968-3800, ext. 3921.

by Sheldon Gooch, an inmate at the Rankin County Correctional Institute.

Free, free, free at last

By Ed McDaniel

Few of us know much about being locked in prison. Being free to go and do as we please is such a commonplace thing with us. If asked if we are free, most of us would say without question "yes," but are we? I've not met many truly free church people. Most are living under some type of self-imposed confinement.



McDaniel

we do?

Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Jesus, looking into the faces of this group of hurting people, saw that their need for freedom went far beyond physical locks and chains. Jesus offered them, as he offers us, a freedom that sets us free to live and be, not what someone else has chosen us to be, but what he knows we can be. This kind of freedom can be had in spite of the traumatic circumstances that may bind us physically.

What's this dynamic truth that Jesus offers all mankind? It is a saving truth. Saving people from the chains of sin. Once this is accomplished in our lives, we are then free to allow God to make out of us "all that we can be."

God does not make out of us what he wants to, but only what we will let him make. Give God control of your life. Let his truth find full growth in your life.

Ed McDaniel is pastor, First, Richland.

New 10 million goal in Sunday School studied

A series of interpretation conferences are set for Sunday School leaders to understand a new goal for reaching people.

The conferences will interpret a Sunday School Board goal of enrolling 10 million people in Bible study by the year 1990. The goal is nicknamed "Challenge 10/90."

The purpose of the 40 conferences is to "provide the practical tools" a Sunday School needs to reach people

for Bible study for Christ, according to Larry Salter, Sunday School Department consultant for Mississippi Baptists.

Especially invited are the pastors, other church staffers, and Sunday School workers. The 40 meetings will take place beginning in January and concluding in April. Each meeting begins at 6:45 p.m. and concludes at 9:30.

The first five will be on Jan. 12 at: Fairview, Columbus; First, West Point; Meadowood, Amory; First, Macon; and South Louisville, Louisville.

The second series will be on Jan. 13: First, Starkville; First, Eupora; First, Okolona; Scooba, Scooba; and Ackerman, Ackerman.

The Feb. 23 meetings will be: Eastwood, Indianola; First, Winona; First, Grenada; and Clarksdale, Clarksdale.

Feb. 24, the meetings will be at: First, Isola; N. Carrollton, Carrollton; First, Charleston; and First, Greenville.

March 9 meetings are at: First, Ita Bena; Hillcrest, New Albany; Gaston, Booneville; Ashland, Ashland; and Parkway, Tupelo.

March 10 will have meetings at: Tishomingo, Tishomingo; First, Corinth; Trinity, Fulton; First, Holly Springs; and Springdale, Ripley.

March 12: First, Carthage; First, Kosciusko; First, Lexington; Southside, Yazoo City; and First, Cleveland.

April 13: First, Coldwater; North Oxford, Oxford; and Associational Center, Philadelphia.

April 14: First, Calhoun City; First, Pontotoc; First, Water Valley; and First, Batesville.

Mississippi Baptist activities

Dec. 7 Foreign Missions Day in Sunday School (SS Emphasis)

Joint Committee probe meet

(Continued from page 3)

the SBC is to maintain its relationship with the Baptist Joint Committee. "I choose the word 'adjustments,' very carefully," he said. "I don't think after all of the fact-finding we would recommend the status quo. We may recommend ways to help the Baptist Joint Committee, to enhance the effectiveness of the Baptist Joint Committee. Those are adjustments."

"Adjustments don't necessarily mean that I think they are doing something wrong. 'Adjustments' may mean they are doing things right, and we need to enhance that."

The two-day meeting featured an appearance by U.S. Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., who told committee members that in his relationship with the staff of the BJCPA he has "felt ministered unto and not just lobbied."

Hatfield, who grew up as a Conservative Baptist, is a member of Georgetown Baptist Church, dually aligned with the SBC and with American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

He cited the Baptist Joint Committee and the Christian Legal Society for their assistance in the passage of Equal Access legislation, which allows secondary schoolchildren equal opportunity for religious activities as they have for other extracurricular activities.

Also appearing before the committee were representatives of the American Baptist Churches, Seventh Day Adventists, United Methodists, National Council of Churches, National Association of Evangelicals and Christian Legal Society, all of whom maintain offices in Washington and who told how their offices are organized and of their contact with the BJCPA on various issues.

The meeting also featured sharp questioning of BJCPA staffers over the joint committee's opposition to the School Prayer Amendment, the leadership style of Executive Director Dunn, as well as Dunn's former association with the controversial People For The American Way and the writing of Associate Executive Director Stan Hastey.

Missionary News

Missionaries now on furlough in Mississippi:

Ralph and Gena Calcote, Japan, 1625 Easy St., Yazoo City; Glenn and Patt Bien, Bangladesh, Rt. 2, Box 137-A, Coldwater; Rodrick and Caroline Conerly, Peru, 721 East Northside Drive, Jackson;

Phillip and Laura Dunaway, Brazil, Pine Trail Apt., M-6, Spring Ridge Road, Clinton; David and Ollie Mayhall, West Africa, 100 Georgia Avenue, Hattiesburg; Michael and Kathie Chute, Brazil, 407 N. 38th Ave., Hattiesburg; Gerald and Glenda Davis, Philippines, 935 S. Lawndale, Apt. D14, Tupelo; Hal and Lou Ann Lee, France, Box 302, Long Beach; Bob and Flora Holifield, Italy, Rt. 10, Box 244, Laurel.

Paul Pressler, a Texas appeals court judge from Houston and Executive Committee member, was critical of Dunn's comments during the debate on the School Prayer Amendment, as well as Hastey's writing in particular and the Baptist news media in general.

In addition to Young, Pressler, and Robinson, committee members are vice chairman, James Yates, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City, Miss., Carolyn Miller, a homemaker from Huntsville, Ala.; Frank Lady, an attorney from Jonesboro, Ark.; Frank Ingraham, an attorney from Nashville, Tenn.; David Maddox, a real estate developer from Fullerton,

Calif.; and James Jones, pastor of Campbellsville (Ky.) Baptist Church.

Dan Martin is Baptist Press news editor.

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Shortfall rises to \$1 million

Cooperative Program from Mississippi Baptists brought in \$1.1 million, according to an announcement by Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

However, the shortfall of income reached more than a million dollars at the end of November, with only one month left to catch up.

November gifts totaled \$1,101,305, making the 1986 gifts to the unified budget efforts of Southern Baptists in Mississippi total \$15,878,857.

This is \$1,125,310 less than the amount expected by Mississippi Baptists when they voted the budget of \$18,550,000 last year. The pro rata budget for 11 months would be \$17,004,167.

Said Kelly, "When we saw that we would not be receiving the full amount, we began to draw back on spending." He added, "we never spend what we do not receive and we trust Mississippi Baptists to fund the ministries they have endorsed to the best of their abilities."

BJCPA welcomes study, says Dunn

WASHINGTON (BP) — The executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs told a nine-member fact finding committee he "welcomes" their investigation into the work of the religious liberty watchdog organization.

Dunn told the committee he both welcomes their fact-finding visit and supports an enhanced Southern Baptist presence in Washington.

"It may surprise some of you that you have no stronger backer for a Southern Baptist presence in Washington than James M. Dunn," he said.

"Southern Baptists do need an independent presence in Washington. It has come to some realization, with Larry Braidfoot (general counsel and citizenship specialist with the SBC Christian Life Commission) spending about a week a month here.

"We are eager and anxious to magnify the Southern Baptist voice in Washington," Dunn said. "We will do what we can," to support a voice on moral issues other than the BJCPA assignment.

Dunn also told the committee he believes the BJCPA "has been doing our job," in Washington, and added he thinks "we have been doing it the way Southern Baptists and others have asked us to do it." Despite that, he said, "We are open to change."

Dunn was questioned about the committee's opposition to the constitutional amendment on school prayer, which was opposed despite a 1982 SBC resolution supporting the action.

Dunn said the position taken by the staff followed a position statement adopted by the BJCPA board in March of 1982. "We were saying what the committee told us to say," he explained.

The executive also said the 1982 resolution contained "factual errors," in that it said no government official would write the prayer. Dunn said a White House briefing paper had said if the prayer were allowed, "someone" would have to write the prayers.

He added the 1982 SBC resolution was in opposition to eight other SBC resolutions passed supporting the Supreme Court's 1962-63 decisions opposing state-mandated prayer in the classrooms. Following the 1982 SBC resolution, he said, 10 state conventions acted on the matter; nine "repudiated" the SBC document and one supported it.

Stan Hastey, associate executive director, told the committee: "There is the perception that the Baptist Joint Committee has regularly defied the wishes of the Southern Baptist Convention. But in the entire 50-year history of the organization, the only time the position of the Baptist Joint Committee ran contrary to that of the SBC was in 1982. It is not as though we have been unresponsive. On the contrary, it has been a very happy consensus across the years."

One member of the fact-finding committee, Paul Pressler, an appeals court judge from Houston, was critical of Dunn's published comments during the school prayer amendment debate. At the time, Dunn said President Reagan was "playing

petty politics with prayer" and engaging in "despicable demagoguery" in regard to the amendment.

The Texas judge referred to Dunn's comments as "disgraceful conduct" and demanded an apology and assurances "you will not do that again." Study Committee Chairman Gary F. Young of Phoenix, Ariz., told Dunn he believes the statement "hurt your witness."

Dunn told the committee he regrets his choice of words in the heat of political battle.

Wesley Forsline, chairman of the BJCPA, and pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, affiliated with the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., in Minneapolis, noted Dunn's job "calls for someone who can be abrasive and a 'burr-under-someone's-saddle,'" and said of the remarks concerning Reagan, "That is one of the things that happens up here. I am not going to take it too seriously."

Pressler, however, said Dunn's remarks "hurt the Baptist Joint Committee very badly."

Forest Montgomery, general counsel for the National Association of Evangelicals, told the fact-finding committee the comments likely had a positive end result.

"The Baptist Joint Committee is sometimes admittedly fiery. They started out on the school prayer issue... (with) rhetoric that was more exaggerated than we would have used. But it is interesting the way that worked out. Having quite plainly opposed the president on the school prayer amendment, then when the Baptist Joint Committee went to bat for Equal Access, it gave them great credibility on that school prayer issue."

Equal Access legislation, actively supported by the NAE and the BJCPA, allows secondary school students "equal access" to school facilities for religious activities as are granted to other extracurricular activities.

During the meeting, Dunn told the committee he "made a mistake" to serve as a director of People For The American Way, a First Amendment rights coalition. Dunn served one three-year term but declined a second term after criticism of the organization by Southern Baptists.

According to its critics, the organization has engaged in "vicious attacks" on "conservative Baptists" including former presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dunn was questioned about the fact he is included in a currently-available fund-raising tape circulated by People For The American Way.

Although several of the committee members said they had been shown the tape by Albert Lee Smith, a Birmingham, Ala., insurance executive and Southern Baptist representative on the BJCPA, Dunn said he has not seen the tape, did not know he had been included, and has never been contacted by Smith about the tape.

Young told Dunn he "regrets" that Smith had chosen to show the tape to several committee members but had not contacted Dunn directly about it.

Pressler also questioned Hastey



Mississippi Preachers

Alice Cox, librarian for the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission, presents a copy of a new volume, "Mississippi Baptist Convention Ministers," to Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer, of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The new volume was compiled by Jack Gunn, executive secretary of the Historical Commission.

Committee members feel press has been unfair

During the fact-finding meeting concerning the work of the Baptist Joint Committee, two committee members, Darrell Robinson and Paul Pressler, carried on a discussion concerning their feelings about Baptist news reporting in general.

"The times out of which these things came were highly emotionalized times of polarization," said Darrell Robinson, secretary of the SBC Executive Committee and pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church of Mobile, Ala.

"I think it is apparent, at least to me, that generally the press has been biased against the Judge (Pressler) and the movement which he is identified with. But I see moderation and a change and a coming together like we haven't had before. I think we are growing through it," Robinson said.

"I wish that we could move on from this with reconciliation and forgiveness. I know it is hard to forgive... it is hard to forgive when we are mistreated or when one we love is mistreated. But the Word tells me that God has forgiven me and he gave his Son. It wasn't easy for Jesus to forgive us on that cross, but he has done it. "God forgets. I have a hard time forgetting, but I find that if I'll forgive, it grows less and less vivid in my mind and heart as I go on,

about articles he has written on the current strife in the SBC and his coverage of a meeting during the 1986 annual meeting of the SBC. The Texan referred to Hastey's articles as "bad reporting... absolutely terrible journalism."

Hastey said in 13 years as a Baptist Press reporter in Washington he has "written probably 1,000 pieces. Only a very small percentage of them has ever been questioned. This (a story on the 1986 meeting) is one of these instances. But, as I tried to tell the judge that day, it was an honest mistake. I do not write that which I know to be false."

not treasuring it and not going over and over it. So I wish we could practice this forgiveness and leave behind these things," Robinson added.

Pressler said he agreed with Robinson, but added: "I think sometimes things need to be brought to light in order that we might put them behind us.

If we are not confrontational on solving problems when wrong has been done, then we will not get the problems solved."

Robinson said: "I think you are right, and this is the time to be confrontational and to resolve it and to get it on the table. Then we can leave it behind and move on to greater things. Can you do that?"

Pressler answered: "I am willing to do so, but I do think we need to know the unfairness that there has been."

See page 7 for related story on the next BJCPA hearing.

Mississippian named BWA committee chair

WASHINGTON (BP) — Rusty Griffin, director of the children and youth department of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, has been elected chairman of the North American Baptist Fellowship Youth Committee. Griffin is a former Mississippi RA consultant.

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Non-Christian growth

The world's urban areas are growing by more than 80,000 non-Christians a day, counting births minus deaths and the influx of people from rural areas, says missions researcher David Barrett.

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Liberia missionary murderer confesses

(Continued from page 3)

something of this sort at Mount Nimba Baptist Church," he said.

Morris came to Yekepa only a few months ago, telling the missionaries he had wandered from the right life but had changed, and wanted to serve God in Yekepa. "Naturally, Earl Williams and George Senter wanted to take him at his word, and they befriended him," said Brown. "Both were trying to help him."

Morris, who was not ordained, had graduated in 1979 from the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary and found a job teaching at Ricks Institute, a Baptist school run entirely by Liberians, Brown said. While working at Ricks Institute, he and another seminary graduate helped in a village church ministry. But he left Ricks Institute early this year and temporarily lost fervor for the Christian life, Brown said.

Morris originally was from Monrovia but came to Yekepa several years ago to secure vocational training as an electrician, Brown said. During this time Williams baptized him as a new Christian.

During recent months Morris had visited regularly in the Senters' home, and he had even slept there. So it was not unusual that Mrs. Senter would let him enter when he came to the door at about 11 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25, Brown said.

After the murder, Morris apparently took Mrs. Senter's keys and locked the home from the outside, Brown said. According to his own confession, Morris discarded the keys and his own clothes outside after changing into Senter's clothes, Brown said. Near the house, police later found the clothes, the Senters' passports and some letters from a Baptist Royal Ambassador youth group in High Point, N.C.

Yekepa is a modern city by Liberian standards and run by a concern named LAMCO, a Liberian subsidiary of several European and American iron-ore strip mining firms. Because of LAMCO's influence, the town has a modern supermarket, a water system and a company-run school. A planned city, Yekepa is structured much like an old Southern cotton milltown, with districts in which company people live separately from expatriates and non-company people.

LAMCO's own security forces investigated the murder with Liberian police, and Morris made his public confession in the office of the director of plant security with a number of Liberian police authorities in attendance, Brown said.

A picture of Morris, taken from the 1979 seminary yearbook, had been publicized throughout the country before his arrest. Baptist youth in the town of Karnplay, who knew Morris,

identified him as he was caught apparently trying to flee the country, Brown said.

Rachel Senter's death is believed to be the first murder of a dependent foreign missionary child in Southern Baptist history. Mrs. Senter's death is the 11th murder of a Southern Baptist foreign missionary since the board was organized in 1845.

The last such victim, James Philpot, was shot to death last year after a traffic accident in Mexico City. The first known victim was J. Landrum Holmes, who was killed in China in 1861 as he attempted to persuade invaders not to attack a village.

Southern Baptist missionaries murdered in the past 25 years were Mississippian Archie Dunaway, killed by communist-backed guerrillas in Zimbabwe in 1978; Gladys Hopewell, murdered in Taiwan in 1973; Mavis Pate, who died in an Arab guerrilla ambush in Gaza in 1972; and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Potter, found murdered in their home in the Dominican Republic in 1971.

Southern Baptists have 67 personnel, including the Senters, assigned to work in Liberia. More than 50 are on the field now, scattered throughout the nation of about 2.2 million people.

Mrs. Senter was a graduate of Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C. She received a master of religious education degree from

Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a master of science degree in social work from the University of Louisville.

Before she and her husband were employed as missionary associates, she taught high school in Chesapeake,

Va., and did social work in Evansville, Ind., where Senter was director of missions for the Southwestern Indiana Southern Baptist Association. The Senters were home missionaries in Indiana from 1971 to 1980.

Marty Croll writes for the FMB.

Bus trip to Senior Adult Convention planned in April

A motor coach trip to the Southern Baptist Senior Adult Convention in Ft. Worth, Tex., has been planned in cooperation with the Mississippi Program of Family Ministries.

The bus will depart from Jackson on Monday April 27, 1987, and return following the conclusion of the convention on Wednesday, April 29.

The cost of the trip will include convention registration fee, motor coach trip, optional sightseeing on Tuesday afternoon, and hotel accommodations for two nights. No meals are included.

The cost of this package per person is: Single room — \$245; Two persons per room — \$185; Three persons per room — \$165; Four persons per room — \$155.

The three day convention is a first ever for Senior Adults and no others are planned for the future. The convention will be held in the Tarrant

County Convention Center in Ft. Worth.

Jess Moody, pastor of First Church, Van Nuys, Calif. will be the keynote speaker. Russell Newport is the featured soloist and Wilbur Swartz will conduct theme meditations. Newport and Swartz were on the faculty for a Senior Adult Chautauqua at Glorieta this year.

Accommodations for those traveling on this chartered bus leaving from Jackson will be the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Ft. Worth. This is the convention headquarters hotel and only a block from where the convention sessions will be held.

For further information write to Norman Rodgers, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205. Escorts for the trip will be Norman Rodgers and Ethel McKeithen.

SCRAPBOOK

Lazarus and the rich man

Gale Anderson, Taylorsville

A certain rich man once lived on the earth,
He was striving for millions to be worth.
He cared nought for his righteous neighbor,
Who was terminal ill and unable to labor.

He was not concerned about his neighbor's hunger,
But for stocks and bonds he was a monger.
Money, money, money was his one great desire,
Little did he know that he soon would expire.

The rich man loved fine clothes and worldly lore,
One day, unexpected, death knocked at his door.
Death said, you thought you were healthy and whole,
But I have come to take your soul.

The rich man's funeral had class, dignity, and style,
The preacher said, this man was meek and mild.
The liberals said, he should have been on the Deacons' Board,
The conservatives said, we erred when this lost soul was ignored.

The wicked, rich man opened his eyes in hell,
He looked into heaven and saw that Lazarus was well.
No more cancerous sores, no more piercing pain,
Lazarus was reaping the reward of having been born again.

On earth the rich man wanted AU to put in the bank,
In hell he wanted H₂O to drink.
On earth he had no regards for the welfare of others,
In hell he became concerned about his brothers.

The moral of the poem you have just read is this,
If God blesses you financially don't go amiss.
Do as did rich Zaccheus who climbed a sycamore tree,
Come down from your tree, ask Jesus Christ to set you free.

The lesser light

God, the moon, Your lesser light
Of the fourth day of Creation,
Rose silently, majestically, over those mountains,
Filling our hearts with sentiments and emotions
Too deep for utterance.
Make us cognizant of the fact
That no mountain in our earthbound existence,
No valley of despair,
Is too high nor too low
For Your Shining Spirit
To touch, to enlighten,
To remove the shadows
Of our human frailties.

Lift up our eyes unto the hills,
Oh, Lord,
That we may behold Your glory there.
—Maxine E. McAdory
Jackson

Worry dragons walk the mind
When night appears,
Imprisoned by the light,
Dark loosens fears.

Beasts trample through each dream
To scatter peace,
Then break the doors of hope
To doubt release.

A stitch in time

I think of life as a hand-knit scarf
That our conscience holds together
But the smallest sin we commit that mars
Unless by conscience endeavor
We mend at once before it gets too large
Can unravel our lives forever.
—Valerie Boyd Howell
Ripley

Throughout long worried night
Destruction feel,
Then cornered, captured, lost,
To God appeal.

His victory song of love
Awaiting there,
The Prince of Peace to vanquish
Night's dragon scare.
—Mrs. D. F. Crowe
Greenville

One trouble with a lot of folks is that
they are more interested in speed than
in direction.

A man in Montana complained,
"Things just aren't what they used to be — and one of them is me."

Nobody has yet listened himself out
of a job.

Fast, reckless driving often leads to
slow, soft music.

It's in God's plan

It's in God's plan for fall to show,
To every man, the leaves aglow.
And in the leaves, may we see love.
We shall believe it's from above,
And then we'll know it's in God's plan.

For you to see the love aglow,
Look at a tree, and you will know
Of God's great love for you and me;
It's from above, for all to see,
In God's great plan, of every leaf.

Yellow leaves tell Christ is the Light
For those who follow, the pathway's bright.
Green leaves tell us to grow in grace —

One day we must meet face to face
With Jesus Christ. It's in God's plan.

The red leaves say the blood that flowed
Has paid the way to make us whole.
The gold leaves tell of heav'n above,
Built so well by God's own love.
It's in God's plan for fall to show.

It's in God's plan, the brown leaves fall,
Made by God's hands, he loves us all.
The orange leaves know we do not hate.
Let your love show, it's not too late.
It's in God's plan for fall to show.

—Maggie Whittington
Meadville, MS

Conservatives, moderates lay down arms in Florida

By Greg Warner

PENSACOLA, Fla. (BP) — Groups on both sides of Florida Baptists' theological/political battle have disbanded.

Both the fundamentalist steering committee, headed by Homer Lindsay Jr., and the moderate group, called Florida Baptists for Cooperation, met during the recent Florida Baptist State Convention in Pensacola.

The fundamentalist group voted to disband in a late-night meeting Nov. 11, the second day of the state convention. The moderate group, which had met earlier in the week, reached its decision Nov. 13, the day after the convention closed.

Lindsay, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, cited two factors in his group's decision — the peace plan offered last month by the presidents of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries and the repeated request of the SBC Peace Committee to abstain from political tactics.

"We need to pray for the seminary presidents," Lindsay told the 26 men who gathered at the Pensacola Hilton Hotel. "We are accepting this (statement) as being made from honorable men."

The presidents' plan, dubbed the Glorietta Statement, commits the seminaries to enforce their confessional statements, "foster" balanced teaching, respect the convictions of "all Southern Baptists," pick teachers and speakers from across the SBC theological spectrum, lead out in spiritual growth, and emphasize Baptist doctrine and heritage.

The statement also affirms the supernatural origin of Christianity and biblical miracles; belief in full inspiration of Scripture and that the "66 books of the Bible are not errant in any area of reality;" and that there are "legitimate concerns" regarding the seminaries, which are being addressed.

Lindsay praised the statement as an indication the presidents believe the Bible. He said the seminaries now should implement the statement.

"We will accept it at face value," he told the steering committee. "Why shouldn't we?"

Lindsay said the SBC now can get "back to where it should be." When it happens, he said, no seminary students will be led by their professors "to doubt the Word of God. This would be pleasing to God. This is what we want. Nothing else."

Steering committee members, who approved unanimously Lindsay's suggestion to disband, said they would not reorganize unless moderates forced them to. "If the situation changes, we can activate ourselves in a week's notice," Lindsay said.

After receiving word of the vote by Lindsay's organization, members of the moderate group issued a statement of appreciation for Lindsay "in leading his organization of Florida fundamental-conservatives to disband."

"Organizations which segregate and isolate any of God's family are manifestly out of character for those

whom God has distinctly declared to be 'one in Christ,'" the statement said. "It was never our desire to promote such a spirit. Perhaps we all are beginning to realize that there are better alternatives to preserving both our heritage and our diversity than overt political activity."

The statement, released Nov. 12, said Florida Baptists for Cooperation would consider disbanding also. David Medley, chairman of the moderates, later telephoned the group's steering

committee members, who agreed Nov. 13 to dissolve the group.

Medley, pastor of Stetson Baptist Church of DeLand, said the moderates would not reorganize unless Lindsay's group "resumes its activities."

Lindsay said the struggle to return the SBC to its conservative roots is not over. "We need to stay in it until it is pushed through to total victory."

Greg Warner writes for the Florida Baptist Witness.

BJCPA testimony invited Jan. 20

WASHINGTON (BP) — Southern Baptists who wish to comment on the work of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs may do so in an open meeting in Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 20, 1987.

A special study committee, named by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee to study the relationship between the SBC and the Washington-based religious liberty watchdog group, invited persons who wish to comment on the BJCPA to its next meeting, to be held in the SBC building at 901 Commerce.

The committee was charged with the dual responsibility of studying the relationship and making recommendations, as well as studying the makeup of the SBC Public Affairs Committee, a 15-member group that

relates to the BJCPA.

Gary F. Young, chairman of the nine-member committee, said a time block from 1 to 9 p.m. has been set aside to hear from people who wish to have input in the committee's ultimate decision.

Young, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Phoenix, Ariz., said people who wish to appear must notify him in writing of their intention by Jan. 5. He can be addressed at First Southern Baptist Church, 3100 W. Camelback Road, Phoenix, Ariz. 85017.

Presenters will be limited to 15 minutes but do not necessarily need to take all of the time, Young said.

In addition to inviting Southern Baptists to participate, Young said

Discipleship ministers organize at workshop

By Terry Barone

DALLAS (BP) — A group of 50 ministers whose primary responsibility in their churches is discipleship ministries recently formed the Association of Ministers and Coordinators of Discipleship (AMCD).

Gathered at a discipleship institute at First Baptist Church of Garland, Texas, those attending a workshop of discipleship coordinators formed the association to assist Southern Baptist churches in beginning or strengthening discipleship ministries.

John Kramp, associate pastor for discipleship ministries at First Church of Garland, said the gathering was the "first of its kind. We don't

know of another place where a group of discipleship ministers has met."

Officers are Larry Roberts, minister of evangelism/discipleship, First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tenn., president; Kramp, vice president; and Edward Thiele, associate professor of discipleship, New Orleans Seminary, secretary-treasurer.

Barone writes for Texas Baptist Public Relations Department.

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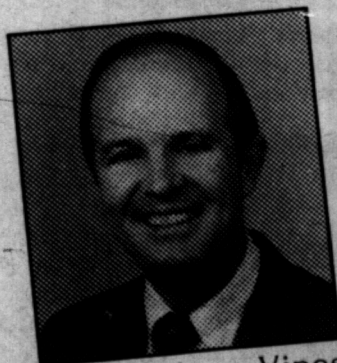
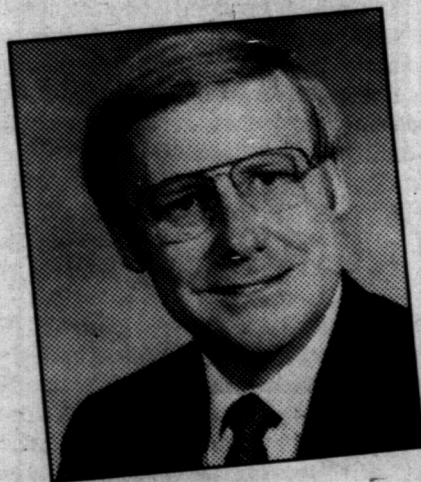
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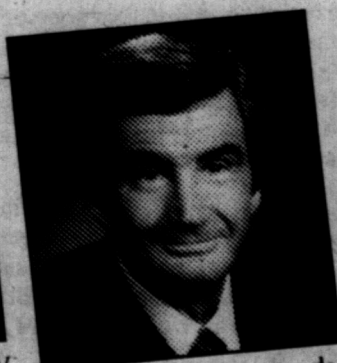
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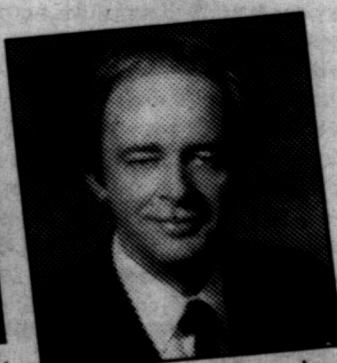
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John Morgan, Bill Stafford, Fred Wolfe, Stan Coffey, Junior Hill, Tom Elliff

Just for the Record



McCool Church, McCool, held its centennial celebration, Oct. 26.

Those dressing in "yesteryear" dress are pictured, left to right, front row, Matthew Doude, Tracey Doude, Edna Norris, Effie Blaine, Francis Jones, Mildred Shurden, Laura Adams, and Christy Jones. Back row, Mrs. Ruth Trim, Cindy Doude, Katherine Doude, David Jones, Fran Fisher, and Betty Fisher. Mike Howell is pastor.



The William Brown (missionary to Africa) Chapter of Gore Springs Church, Gore Springs, conducted its annual RA Recognition Service, Nov. 9. The chapter has nine members and two counselors. The boys were given patches for books and electives completed. Mark Floyd and Chris Floyd were recognized and given awards for high attendance, most electives done, outstanding work, and leadership for the chapter.

Pictured, front row, (l to r) are Tyson Blakely, Mark Floyd, and Jonathan Blakely. Second row, Stephen Thompson, Mark Fielder, Chris Floyd, and Daren Hood. The counselors are Mr. and Mrs. Larry Blakely. Bernette Fielder is pastor.



GAs of Southway Church, Brookhaven, recently held their Missions Adventures recognition service. The theme was "My Promise to God." Girls who received special recognition are pictured, left to right, Christy Barlow, Amy Hill, and Samantha Fauver. Back row, Emily Allen, Pepper Mullins, Stephanie Rushing, Kipp Cotten, Karen McCullough, and Diane Bailey. GA leaders are Becky Bennett, Julia Richardson, and Debbie Barlow. Daveen McCullough is GA director.



Girls in Action organization of Calvary Church, Greenwood, recently held a recognition service. The GAs have been involved in many mission activities for the church and community. GAs receiving badges are, left to right, Ginny Bond receiving her Mission Adventure 5 badge, April Moss receiving her Mission Adventure 2 badge, and Phelicia Corley receiving her Mission Adventure 1 badge. Leaders of the group are Ginny McGarrh, Mrs. Chester Bond, and Mrs. Donnie Corley. Guest speakers were Gerald Welch, Leflore Associational director of missions, Mrs. John Holly, Leflore GA Director and Mrs. Richard Avant, Calvary Acteens Director.

A memorial scholarship has been established in memory of Max Burford Graham at Clarke College, by his wife, Mrs. Jessie Smith Graham and his daughter, Mrs. Lynna Melville "Melva" Graham Clark, and various friends and relatives.

The proceeds from the yearly interest will go to help a needy sophomore student, preferably one from Tate County or Tippah County, as he studies in preparation for the gospel ministry or music ministry.

Flora Church, Flora, will present its Christmas cantata at Benton Church on Dec. 7, at 7 p.m. "The Reason for the Season" by David Clydesdale is an adult musical with various solos and narration. Evening service at Flora Church will be dismissed so that all may attend this special event.

The Christmas cantata will also be presented at Flora Church on Dec. 14, at 6:45 p.m. The children's choir will present "Christmas Around the World" by Joe Parks.

Bethlehem Church, Pinola, recently awarded pins for perfect attendance in Sunday School. Those receiving pins for one year were Brenda Walker, Tommy Walker, Alvin Myers, Mitchell Myers, David Walker, Adam Myers, and Shelly Walker. Rachel Myers received a pin for two years. Jerome McLendon is pastor.



Bond Church, Bond, held a groundbreaking ceremony at the site of the new parsonage, Nov. 2. Special music was presented by Vaughn Thacker and the "Young-uns."

Participating in the ceremony were Russell Lawson; Charles Mitchell; C. G. Byrd, deacon, who the property was acquired from; and John Wade, pastor.

Pictured are Gerald Simmons, minister of music, and his new wife, the former Cindy Strain, who were married Nov. 21.

Emmanuel Church, 4404 Sagamore St., Jackson, will hold a special note burning service, Dec. 7, at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at the church in the family life center.

Staff Changes

Wendall S. Ward resigned First Southern Church, Pearlinton, Gulf Coast Association, to accept the pastorate of First Church, Lumberton, Lamar Association.

Ward and his wife, Karen, are natives of Florida. He is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary.

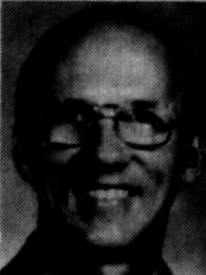
Meadow Grove Church, Brandon, has called Ralph Hall as minister of music and youth. Hall has been serving Meadow Grove since June 1 as interim music director and became full-time on Nov. 1. He formerly served White Oak Church, Smith County. Hall is also general manager of the Maranatha Christian Bookstores in Jackson, Pearl and Vicksburg.

He is married to the former Bonnie Johnson of Coldwater, and they have two daughters Melodye, 10, and Vickie, 2. Rick Kennedy is pastor.

Pine Grove Church, Quitman, (Clarke Co.) has called Arlis V. Nichols as pastor effective Nov. 30. He goes there from Rolling Creek Church of the same association where he has served as associate pastor and minister of music for 14 years.

Liberty Church, Raleigh, has called Danny L. Chaney as pastor. Chaney and his family moved onto the church field Nov.

16. Chaney has been serving as pastor of First Church, Runnels-town since Feb., 1984. Chaney is a graduate of East Central Junior College and New Orleans Seminary.



Chaney



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Gingerbread feast honors senior adults at West Point

The Willing Workers Sunday School Class of Calvary Church, West Point, held its third annual fall feast for its senior citizens on Saturday, Nov. 1.

This tradition was started three years ago when this class had a desire to do something special for the senior citizens to show them that they were special and loved by their church. Each year they have chosen a different theme. This year the theme was "The Gingerbread Feast."

This feast was held in the activity building which was decorated throughout with gingerbread people. A huge gingerbread man was on the

door to greet guests. There was a tree filled with paper gingerbread men. The tables were decorated with gingerbread men at each place, which were used as favors for each guest present. There were 62 in attendance.

The invocation was given by Jim Young, the church's new minister of music and education. Food was prepared by the class.

After the feast, the Grace Quartet from First Church of West Point entertained the group with some old favorites, as well as new songs.

The meeting was dismissed by Payton Myers, the church pastor.

BMC music sets Christmas Vespers Concert Dec. 7

The Blue Mountain College Department of Music will present its annual Christmas Vespers Concert on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 3 p.m.

The concert will be held at Lowery Memorial Baptist Church of Blue Mountain and will feature the BMC Chorale and singers under the direction of David Gilmore, assistant professor of music at BMC.

The groups will perform music by Byrd, Pergolesi, Distler, and others including the Southern premiere of two movements of Three Rössetti Carols by Arizona composer Z. Randall Stroope.

Assisting in the performance will be three other BMC faculty members: Terry McRoberts, piano; G. Edward Ludlow, organ; and Charles Meyer, recorder. There will be no admission charge.

Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

The Singing Churchmen

Editor:

It was interesting to read your comment concerning the length of the Monday evening session of the convention. I believe the real problem with time was in scheduling too many items for that evening.

However, I was delighted to see your solution; the Mississippi Singing Churchmen should stay within their time limit. Assuming you are accurate in your time assessment, then we could have gotten out early had the Bible Treasure speaker not gone over his allotted time; nor had we not had 20 minutes of new workers introduced, plus the report of two committees and the budget presentation, all of which was to have taken 25 minutes. The recognition of the college president and others, which was scheduled for 10 minutes, also went overtime. In addition, there was an appeal for prayer by a missionary that was not even listed in the program. The closing by the Churchmen was a part of Dr. Kelly's message, requested by him.

All of the above features were good and needed to be a part of the convention. Had all been done in good order, we may have finished by 8:45 p.m.

Jerry Talley
Minister of Music
Oak Forest Church
Jackson

Please read the editorial again. While it did call for staying within time limits, it pointed out that too much was crammed into the session and called for a change which would give the Singing Churchmen more time because everyone enjoys their presentations. — Editor

Baptist by conviction

Editor:

I would like to address the issues contained in the letters "Pentecostal Power" and "Given Instructions."

As a Southern Baptist pastor, I would never lead our church to ordain a man who did not reflect I Tim. 3:1-7 or who was not controlled and led by the Holy Spirit of God.

However, both letters reflect a growing problem within SBC life. Increasing numbers of churches have lost the theological distinctives that made our denomination great. The doctrines of the Bible expressed by our godly founders: James P. Boyce, J. L. Dagg, Basil Manly, P. H. Mell, John Broadus, W. B. Johnson, and others have been replaced by neo-charisma and theological make-believe.

Shoddy hermeneutics, weak exegesis, and sanctification proof texting mislead our congregations and promote the errors of pentecostalism within our ranks. As a former member of a church that epitomized the above, I saw charismatic churches grow with our former members who were seeking "something more." I've seen the worship of God in the beauty of holiness replaced by a carnival atmosphere and man-centered antics. I've seen theology replaced by thrills and the pursuit of holiness replaced by the pursuit of hilarity. Antinomianism and spiritual pride over the results. We don't look Baptist, sound Baptist, or even believe Baptist. We often reflect more of the Pentecostal-type exaggeration of Wesleyan perfectionism than we do of the orthodox purity expressed in our historical and theological roots.

Regarding Eph. 5:18, I would suggest that a thorough Greek exegesis be performed as well as an exhaustive search of the Scriptures before this verse is declared to be the one master key that answers to the demands, privileges, and problems of progressive sanctification. In answer to the question about altars, we have no altar in our church because we are not Catholic nor are we sacrificing anything.

Doctrine, theology, and church

order do make a difference. I'm Baptist, not by accident or convenience but by divine providence and firm conviction.

M. Tony Ludlow
Coldwater

The Bible is the Benchmark

(Continued from page 2)

much more. Baptists deserve the title of being Bible-believers.

Being Bible-believers, Baptists must never substitute men's descriptions of the Bible for the Bible. The authority of the Bible is not dependent on men's words concerning the word of God. Simple as it may sound, the people of the Book, Baptists, believe the Bible is all the creed they need.

Baptists have and will continue to discuss the Bible. Fine. But Baptists better be sure that in the discussions no statements or words concerning the Bible take the place of the Bible. The Bible is the benchmark for Baptists' beliefs. — PHW

Presnell Wood is editor of the Baptist Standard in Texas.

Americans will spend \$45.8 billion for fun

Americans this year will spend a record \$45.8 billion to be entertained, projects a new study.

That's money for records, tapes, pay TV, video and audio equipment, movies, plays, concerts and sporting events.

The New York research firm of Wilkofsky Gruen Associates says the average of \$520 per household represents a 10.4 percent gain in a year when overall consumer spending is expected to rise only 6.5 percent.

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NEW SCHEDULE FOR



CDT	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00	Changed Lives	Vegetable Soup	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-Lendas	Infinity Factory	Moody Science
6:30	One in the Spirit	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Family Foundations
7:00	Catch the Spirit						Sun School Lesson
7:30	This Is The Life	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Davey and Goliath
8:00	Christopher Closeup	Joy of Music	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things + First	Sunshine Factory
8:30	Westbrook Hospital	Country Crossroads	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Gigglesnot Hotel
9:00	In Touch	COPE	Bill Cosby	Shan Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop +	Skippy/bush Kangaroo
9:30	Joy of Music	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Lone Ranger Cartoon
10:00	Gloria	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Cisco Kid
10:30	Profiles	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Our World
11:00	At Home With the Bible	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	In Concert
Noon	The Baptist Hour	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Country Crossroads
12:30	Vegetable Soup	Vegetable Soup	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-Lendas	Infinity Factory	Jimmy Houston
1:00	Prime Timers	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Super Handyman
1:30	Sunday Selection	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Plant Groom
2:00		COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	David Wade
2:30	Great Churches	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Davey and Goliath
3:00	Joy of Music						Sunshine Factory
4:00	Gloria	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	Gigglesnot Hotel
4:30	Profiles	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Country Crossroads
5:00	At Home with the Bible	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-Lendas	Infinity Factory	Vegetable Soup	Jimmy Houston
5:30	This Is The Life	Bill Cosby	Shan Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	*Que Pasa?	Skippy/bush Kangaroo
6:00	Christopher Closeup	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Lone Ranger Cartoon
6:30	Westbrook Hospital	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things + First	Joy of Music	Cisco Kid
7:00	Changed Lives						Our World
7:30	One in the Spirit	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads	In Concert
8:00	Catch the Spirit	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Moody Science
9:00	Sunday Selection						Family Foundations
9:30							Sun School Lesson
10:00	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	This Is The Life
10:30	Prime Timers	Bill Cosby	Shan Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	*Que Pasa?	Christopher Closeup
11:00	Changed Lives	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Westbrook Hospital
11:30	One in the Spirit	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things + First	Joy of Music	Our World
12:00	Catch the Spirit						In Concert
12:30	This Is The Life	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads	Super Handyman
1:00	Christopher Closeup	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Plant Groom
1:30	Westbrook Hospital						David Wade
2:00	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Moody Science
2:30	Prime Timers						Family Foundations
3:00							Sun School Lesson
3:30	Super Handyman	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	Skippy/bush Kangaroo
4:00	Plant Groom	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lone Ranger Cartoon
4:30	David Wade						Cisco Kid

*Effective Week of November 23

+Effective Week of December 7

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

God limits sinful expressions of nationalistic pride

By James W. Street
Genesis 11:1-9

In most of biblical thought pride is the root sin from which all other sins stem. That is true with regard to individuals and it is most certainly true with regard to collections of individuals called churches, towns, racial groups, economic entities, power moguls, or nations. Group pride lurks in the shadow of the worst evils of our mutual existence — behind racism, bigotry, and jingoism.



Street

For pride is the most subtle, the most insidious of all sins, which is why it is the root sin. Pride is placing one's self (individually or collectively) at the center of the universe and then surveying always and only from that vantage point. Sinful, destructive pride that feeds off the assumed virtue of in-

LIFE AND WORK

flated selfhood is the opposite of healthy spirituality. It substitutes arrogance for self-control, turns self-assurance into self-assertiveness, and self-respect into superiority. It leads a person to forget who he/she really is — a human being made in the image of almighty God.

Someone suggested once that "every man would like to be God if it were possible; some few find it difficult to admit the impossibility." I suggest that more than some few find it difficult to admit the impossibility. Pride, individual or corporate, that destroys is the self-exaltation to the place where only God has the right to be, at the center of meaning for life.

It is terribly easy to be tempted into taking ourselves too seriously, terribly easy to be seduced by the oldest whisper in the world, "You shall be like God." Pride on one's part or

on our part as a nation is the sin of the virtuous, of the hard-working, of the self-sufficient, of oft-times constructive members of society. The devilish strategy of pride is that it always attacks us, not at our weakness, but at our strength. It is the sin of the privilege God of the powerful, of the best, and of the brightest.

That kind of pride is a sundering sin, for it fractures relationships. It alienates us from the framework of our dependence upon God and our interdependence with other people and nations with whom we are intended to function. It even invades our religious experience.

Medieval theologians had a word for this kind of withdrawal; they called it "singularity." Bernard, mystic and moralist, is quoted as pointing out "the proud monk thinks of himself as singular and exceptional. He is inclined to fast more, pray longer, sleep less, look sicker than his fellows, proving that he is a singularly holy man."

In terms of our own religious experience, singularity may cause us to look askance at those who do not believe as we do, pray as we do, or behave as we do. We withdraw into a safe, little circle and practice a kind of passive, patronizing, condescending pride coupled with more than a little scorn for those not like us. Then we live estranged and separate, aloof from others, from our real selves, and thus inevitably from God.

As it is with individuals in society and religious concerns, so it is with nations and their collective sinful pride. The old man says, "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." The people of Babel acting out their sinful pride sought to go beyond the boundaries of human existence and received the logical punishment on the jingoistic effort. God does, indeed, limit the sinful expressions of nationalistic pride. I wonder if we are listening?

James Street is pastor, First, Cleveland.

A new community is life-changing hope of world

By Robert E. Self
Acts 2:38-47; 4:32-35

Our studies of recent weeks have taken us through the rise, fall and, rising again of the kingdom in Israel and Judah. Through much pain and over many years the people struggled, either to get away from God or to get back to him. The kingdom that was produced was a shadow of what God was planning for us. The new kingdom was to be one of faith and personal relationships with God through Jesus. Let's look at our text.



Self

I. The Command, Acts 2:38-40

Jesus had walked among men performing his ministry of revealing the Father. As he did so, many believed but many others rejected him. The cross was predictable. After his death and resurrection, he ascended to the Father.

Those who knew and believed him were heartbroken. It was quite natural for them to gather and pray as they tried to understand. At Pentecost, men from many nations were in

Jerusalem along with those who had followed. Peter took the opportunity as one to preach, and as he did, God began to work. Under conviction, they cried out for word on their responsibility. Peter declared that they were to:

A. Repent. The word repent means to turn about. It is a picture of a change in direction, a turning from one's sins and to God in Jesus. An early step in the spiritual pilgrimage of any person is the turning from sin.

B. Be Baptized. Scholars generally agree that the word employed here means to "immerse, plunge or submerge." We believe that the act of baptism is a picture of huge spiritual proportions. I am convinced that while baptism itself does not save, that it is far more than a bath. It is a picture of our experience, an identification with Jesus and saints across the years and an act of obedience. And in some wonderful way, Jesus is present when we obey.

C. Receive. Peter declared to those who heard that their obedience would result in their receiving forgiveness, salvation, and the Holy

Spirit.

II. Community, Acts 2:41-47

The response of three thousand people signalled the blooming of the church. Believers came together in worship and fellowship. They were together in one place, with one mind and one purpose.

III. Cohesion, Acts 4:32-35

It is amazing that God was able to take people from a dozen nations, speaking diverse languages and mold them into a unit. But that's just what happened. Their distinctiveness gave way to oneness as a body.

Their unity began to be expressed right away. They held their possessions in common and shared with each other as each had need.

The distinct group that remained in Jerusalem began to meet to pray together and to plan their ministry. The vision grew to the point that the entire early church was made up of evangelists.

As they prayed, planned, and invested in the mission of the church, the apostles received new power. Men heard and believed their message. Lives began to be changed. There are

at least two reasons for this. First, they were successful because prayer produces power. They prayed and things happened. It ought to be the plan for today. Second, they succeeded because the world saw that a change had taken place in the lives of the churchmen. Few things will validate our message more than changed lives.

Conclusion:

Nicholas Butler once said that there are three categories of people, those who "make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who haven't any idea what is happening." The early church made things happen.

Meadowlark Lemon spent 24 years as a great basketball player — prankster with the Harlem Globetrotters. A few years ago, Lemon found Jesus. He recently stated, "I could never imagine myself with a Bible under my arm and tracts in my pocket, speaking to people about God. But the Holy Spirit came into my life and took over."

The new community is the life changing hope of the world. Preach Jesus and watch him work!

Robert E. Self is pastor, First, Brookhaven.

UNIFORM

Jesus claims to be true light and true freedom

By Marjean Patterson
John 7:53-8:59

Following a long, arduous day of discussion with Jewish leaders in the Temple, John notes that whereas the members of the Sanhedrin went to their own houses for the night, Jesus "went to the Mount of Olives." This is a reminder to us that the Son of Man had few creature comforts during his years on the earth.



Patterson

The next morning, as Jesus again was teaching in the temple, the scribes and Pharisees dragged a woman to him. The woman whom they had seized was an adulteress, a married woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. There must have been expression of smug satisfaction — a sort of "Aha, now we've trapped you" attitude — on the faces of the Jewish leaders. They were convinced they had Jesus on the horns of a dilemma.

The Savior said nothing as he bent forward and began to write in the sand with his finger.

BIBLE BOOK

We are not told the words Jesus wrote. Finally, he raised up and proclaimed the words of truth and condemnation which have been quoted for hundreds of years, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

As he again stooped down and continued to write, the crowd dispersed one by one until there was no individual left to accuse the woman. Neither did Jesus accuse her.

I. The twofold witness to Jesus (8:12-20)

Jesus later returned to the temple. During the Feast of Tabernacles the candelabra were lighted to commemorate God's leadership of the children of Israel in the wilderness. Then at the end of the festival the lights were extinguished.

So, apparently on the next day, Jesus stood in the darkened part of the temple and proclaimed himself to be the light of the world. This declaration was almost more than the Pharisees could stand, so they tried to challenge the validity of his witness.

The Law called for two witnesses to verify a person's testimony. Jesus said his two witnesses were himself and his Father.

II. Jesus' warning to the religious leaders (8:28-30)

In a further confrontation, Jesus warned the religious leaders that they would die in their sins. He continued by stating that the time would come when he would be lifted up by his death on the cross, they would know who he was, from whom he had come, and the truth of what he taught.

III. Sin's slavery and true freedom (8:31-36)

Jesus began to emphasize the importance of committing oneself to him in faith, believing in him, not merely in believing what Jesus taught.

Those who would commit themselves to Jesus would know and experience the liberating truth that God sets people free. While Jesus spoke of the liberation of salvation that comes from knowing God in faith through Jesus Christ, the people were thinking of political freedom, rather than spiritual freedom.

IV. Jesus makes a great claim (8:56-58)

Jesus and the Jewish leaders were engaged in a serious conversation over their heritage.

The Jews were physical seed of Abraham; but because they sought to kill Jesus, they were not behaving as Abraham's spiritual descendants. The Jews began to try to assassinate Jesus' character as they called him the worst possible thing they could think of, a "demon-possessed Samaritan."

Then they asked Jesus if he were greater than Abraham and all the prophets. Jesus reminded them that Abraham had looked forward with hope and joy to the promised Messiah. Since Abraham now lived with God, he could see the birth of Jesus into the world and was glad. Yet the Messiah himself was there among those who claimed Abraham as father and they were rejecting him.

Jesus concluded his message with a great claim as to who he was. "Before Abraham was, I am!" Jesus was claiming eternal being. This was considered blasphemy to the Jews so they reacted with violence and sought to stone Jesus.

Since God's timetable had been fulfilled, Jesus escaped the stoning, leaving the Jewish leaders stunned and furious.

Marjean Patterson is executive director, Mississippi WMU.

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

OCT. 30 - NOV. 12

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NOV. 13 - 24

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HAVE YOU MAILED YOUR GIFT YET?

OUR HOLIDAY GOAL

IS

\$250,000.00

Send your contribution to The Baptist Children's Village so that spiritual, psychological and physical needs of hurting, children may be eased. Please respond to the following appeal of our Executive Director.

For the 27th consecutive year, it is my favored privilege to speak for all of the Mississippi children and youth who live with and depend upon us, as we extend to you and yours our heartiest holiday wishes! As I exercise this privilege, I also discharge a very sober responsibility which is mine, by reminding you of how much Christmas means to these special youngsters, and by bringing some of their needs to your attention.

At all six Village locations — at Deanash in Stone County, at Dickerson Place in Lincoln County; at The India Nunnery Campus in Hinds County; at Reedy Acres in Yalobusha County; at the Farrow Manor Campus in Tate County; and at the New Albany Group Home in Union County; hearts, hopes and lives of Village boys and girls are being lifted by the anticipation of material joys at Christmas and by a forceful reminder of the spiritual promise of the season. You who are our friends, your families and your churches, make this uplifting process possible, year after year, Christmas after Christmas. Our Village staff shares the message of Christmas with troubled children and youth, throughout the year, enabled, supported and sustained by your interest, prayers and giving.

Remembering Village youth who cannot be a part of home and family this Christmas; remembering their very real physical needs in this difficult and expensive year; having been reminded of your importance to them surely you would like to make a donation to the HOLIDAY FUND. Any material Christmas joy which Village children enjoy and much of the food they will eat throughout the year depends upon cash gifts, designated to this fund. We pray that God will bless your home with health, happiness and peace this Christmas and all during the New Year.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

PAUL N. NUNNERY
Executive Director

MAKE CHRISTMAS 1986 particularly meaningful by supporting the ministries of
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MAIL YOUR GIFT TO
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P. O. Box 11308
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Baptist Record

Supreme Court rejects Christmas cross case

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — For the second time this term, the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review a case involving a municipal Christmas display.

Without comment, the high court rejected an appeal by the city of St. Charles, Ill., to keep a cross-shaped Christmas light display atop its municipal fire station.

The American Civil Liberties Union and two of its members asked the U.S. District Court for Northern Illinois to issue a temporary restraint prohibiting St. Charles from including the three-story cross of lights in the city's annual Christmas display.

In granting a preliminary injunction, the district court ruled the cross display had "the effect of conveying an association with or tacit approval of Christianity."

Writing for the appeals court, Judge Richard A. Posner distinguished between

the more traditional creche — or nativity scene — and the cross display. He said all decorations except the cross have lost their "religious connotations for most people," while the cross is "an ancient and vasi-form religious symbol."

"The cross is either a secular decoration, in which event there are many equally or more decorative substitutes at hand, or an attempt to establish Christianity as the officially recognized religion of St. Charles," Posner wrote.

In their attempt to convince the Supreme Court to review the case, attorneys for St. Charles called the lower court decisions a "stilted over-reaction to a legitimate observance of the Christmas holiday season."

They argued the cross display did nothing more than attract shoppers to the downtown area and symbolize peace and goodwill during the

Christmas season.

"The purpose of the Establishment Clause is deprecated when its meaning is tortured to forbid a city's traditional Christmas lighting display on the grounds that illumination of the lights for a few hours each evening poses a danger of establishment of a state church," the city's attorneys contended.

Attorneys for the ACLU emphasized the size and location of the cross made it not just one part of an overall display. They also argued a cross is not a traditional Christmas symbol.

"A cross does not evoke the traditional or historical roots of Christmas," they said. "It evokes the Christian religion itself and the events commemorated at Easter." (86-351, St. Charles v. ACLU)

Kathy Palen writes for the BP Washington bureau.

Volunteers can't keep this anniversary gift

By Jim Newton

ATLANTA (BP) — Charlie and Willye Mae Clement of Chamblee, Ga., an Atlanta suburb, celebrated their fifty-first wedding anniversary on a mission trip to Monrovia, Liberia, helping construct a new church building.

While there, they received an anniversary present they could not accept. A 20-year-old Liberian mother tried to give them her eight-month old daughter.

The Clements were talking to several other mission team members from the Chamblee church at the church construction site in Monrovia when the Liberian woman asked Mrs. Clement to take her baby.

"You want me to hold her?" she asked the mother. "No, you take baby to America," the Liberian woman replied.

The Clements could not believe the mother was willing to give away her baby. "Why would you do this?" Clement asked her.

In halting English, the mother explained she felt the baby would have a better life and better chance of survival in America. The Clements explained it was not legally possible to accept the baby.

Clement, 73, a retired plumbing,

heating and air conditioner contractor, said he was overcome by the mother's love for her child. "She loved the baby so much she was willing to give it away," he said.

Ten members of the Chamblee church, participated in the project as part of a partnership mission effort between the Georgia Baptist Convention and the Liberia Baptist Convention.

David Sapp, pastor of the Chamblee church, said the mission trip was a multi-faceted international venture involving four different projects.

Team members constructed a new church building for the Chocolate City Baptist Church in suburban Monrovia, led daily Bible study sessions for about 70 to 100 Liberian children, led immunization clinics, and participated in a revival meeting resulting in 41 decisions and attendance that was six times normal.

When the team arrived, attendance was about 30 to 40 in services held in a church member's home. On the final service of the revival, held in the incompleting church building on a rainy night, attendance increased to 236.

Even though a tarpaulin covered only half the roof, Liberians sat in the rain on concrete blocks and wooden planks.

"I couldn't help but wonder how many people would attend a revival at Chamblee if they had to sit in the rain on concrete blocks," said Sapp. "Our prayer is that the revival which started in Liberia will continue here in Chamblee."

Jim Newton writes for the Home Mission Board.

Being put on a pedestal is all very fine and good as long as you keep your feet on the ground.

The safest way to cross the street is without being hit.

Ministry extends beyond the bars

By Billy Dugger

GULFPORT, Miss. (BP)—Perry Hilton goes behind bars to share his good news.

"A friend asked me in early 1984 if I would be interested in conducting a jail ministry," remembers Hilton, a volunteer chaplain. "I prayed about it, asking God to direct me if this were his will."

"At first I just listened to the prisoners," he recalls. "They asked who I was, what I wanted, why I was coming to the jail. Things were fairly stilted for a while, but I kept going, walking up and down the rows of cells, introducing myself to prisoners, learning their names. Then the distance between us began to disappear. I gave them Bibles and study materials, and most of the men became friendly."

Soon Hilton was asking prisoners about their knowledge of the Bible, what they understood about God's plan for their lives—if they understood what it meant to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

What Hilton did not do was act judgmentally. "I've talked with, prayed with and for murderers, rapists, drug addicts, and thieves, but I have never condemned any of them," he says. "That's not the way Jesus ministered. He showed love and compassion."

In two years, Hilton has seen changes in the lives of prisoners. One who became a Christian now witnesses to new-inmates who share his cell.

Another Christian prisoner, now released, has a steady job on the Gulf Coast.

There are times Hilton unexpectedly drops in at the jail. "It's easy to see

the impact the Word of God is having," he says, "when I see them studying their Bibles and pouring over study materials. Others tell me this prisoner or that prisoner is praying daily and witnessing."

Hilton's jail ministry extends beyond the bars that separate prisoners from society. On occasion, he meets with families of jailed men, helping them cope with having a family member in jail.

"Most people are not concerned about prisoners until a member of their family gets locked up," he explains. "Then they realize the

prisoners do have needs. Sometimes they give me money to buy Bibles or stationery or postage stamps."

Hilton realizes the legal system is imperfect, but he still is moved when efforts to mete out justice fail.

Hilton realizes prisons have a useful place in maintaining an orderly society. He has learned to cull the "cons," the pitiful stories of prisoners who blame everyone but themselves for where they are and what they have done.

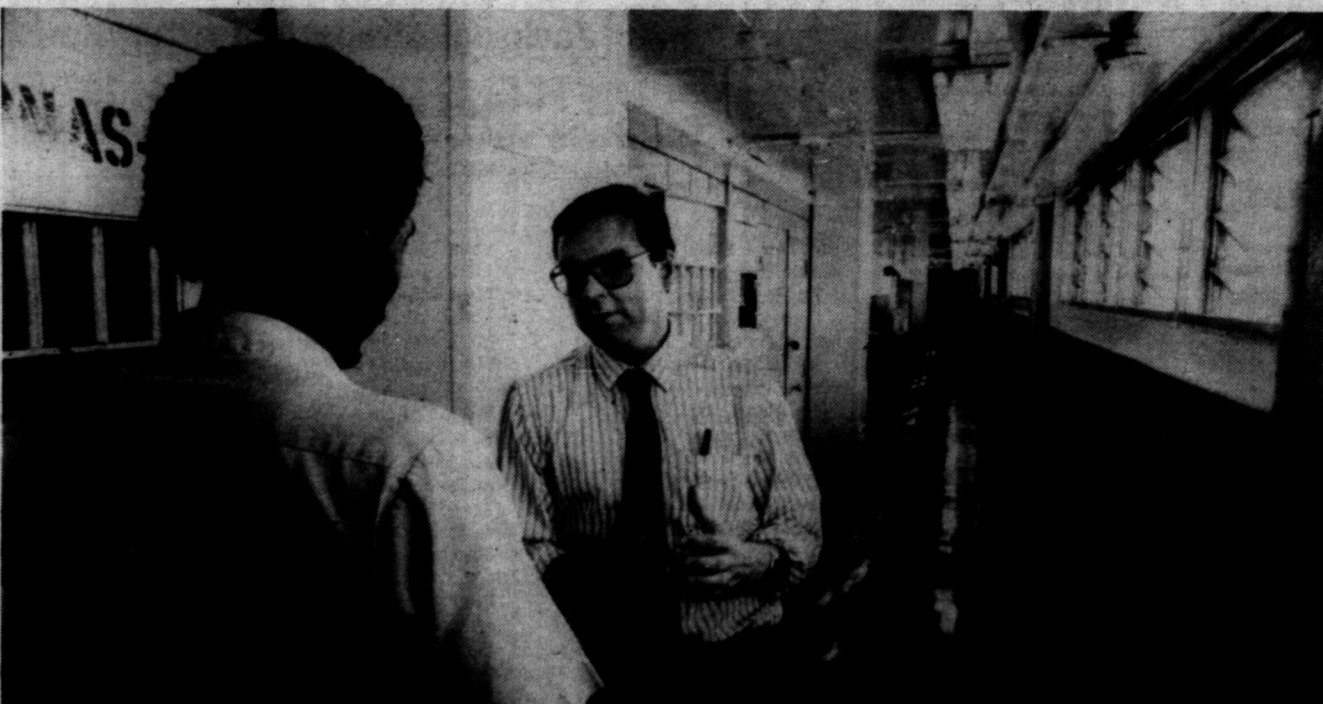
Many of these prisoners, he finds, spend all their time reading law books

and looking for loopholes to get out of jail.

On the other hand, "the prisoners who have accepted Christ and have taken responsibility for what they have done are trying to make the most of their situations," he says.

His advice to people who would start a jail ministry is simple: Pray and seek God's leadership, talk to the jail chaplain and offer services, seek training that might be available, and encourage others to get involved.

Billy Dugger is supervisor of employee communications, Mississippi Power Company, Gulfport.



Volunteer chaplain Perry Hilton goes behind bars to share his good news. The Gulfport, Miss., resident has worked with prisoners since 1984. In those two years he has seen prisoners not only claim their salvation, but also witness to each other. (HMB Photo by Billy Dugger).

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